

CLAIMS

We claim as deserving the protection of Letters Patent:

1. A prosthetic brassiere for retaining at least one breast prosthesis relative to a chest of a wearer, the prosthetic brassiere comprising:

5 a first brassiere cup with an inboard side, an outboard side, and a cup shell with an exterior surface and an interior surface that defines an open inner volume;

 a second brassiere cup with an inboard side, an outboard side, and a cup shell with an exterior surface and an interior surface that defines an open inner volume;

 a means for coupling the inboard side of the first brassiere cup to the inboard side of the
10 second brassiere cup;

 at least one back strap with an end coupled to the outboard side of the first brassiere cup and an end coupled to the outboard side of the second brassiere cup;

 a fastening arrangement operably associated with the first brassiere cup, the second brassiere cup, and the at least one back strap for enabling the first brassiere cup, the second
15 brassiere cup, and the at least one back strap to cooperate to form a body-encircling portion for surrounding the chest of the wearer; and

 a means for retaining a prosthetic breast relative to the open inner volume of the first brassiere cup.

2. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 wherein the fastening arrangement comprises a first jaw panel with an inside face and an outside face, a second jaw panel with an inside face and an outside face, and a tongue panel with a first face and a second face in combination with means for selectively engaging the inside faces of the first and second jaw panels with the first and
5 second faces of the tongue panel.

3. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 2 wherein the means for selectively engaging the inside faces of the first and second jaw panels with the first and second faces of the tongue panel comprises corresponding sections of hook and loop material disposed on the inside faces of the
10 first and second jaw panels and the first and second faces of the tongue panel.

4. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 2 wherein the fastening arrangement comprises a rear-closure fastening arrangement, wherein the at least one back strap comprises first and second strap segments, wherein the first strap segment has a proximal end coupled to the
15 outboard side of the first or the second brassiere cup and a free distal end, wherein the second strap segment has a proximal end coupled to the outboard side of the other of the first or the second brassiere cup and a free distal end, wherein the first and second jaw panels are coupled to the distal end of the first strap segment, and wherein the tongue panel is coupled to the distal end of the second strap segment whereby the distal ends of the first and second strap segments can be
20 coupled together by interposing the tongue panel between the first and second jaw panels to cause the corresponding sections of hook and loop material to engage and whereby the first and

second strap segments can be separated by separating the first and second jaw panels from the tongue panel.

5 5. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 2 wherein the fastening arrangement comprises a
front-closure fastening arrangement wherein first and second jaw panels are coupled to the
inboard side of the first brassiere cup and wherein the tongue panel is coupled to the inboard side
of the second brassiere cup whereby the inboard sides of the first and second brassiere cups can
be coupled together by interposing the tongue panel between the first and second jaw panels to
cause the corresponding sections of hook and loop material to engage and whereby the first and
10 second brassiere cups can be separated by separating the first and second jaw panels from the
tongue panel.

6. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 further comprising a first shoulder strap with a first
end with a means for removably and replaceably coupling to the first brassiere cup and a second
15 end with a means for removably and replaceably coupling to the at least one back strap and a
second shoulder strap with a first end with a means for removably and replaceably coupling to
the second brassiere cup and a second end with a means for removably and replaceably coupling
to the at least one back strap whereby the prosthetic brassiere can be worn in a strapped
arrangement with the first and second shoulder straps coupled to the first and second brassiere
20 cups and the at least one back strap and whereby the prosthetic brassiere can be worn in a
strapless configuration with the first and second should straps removed.

7. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 6 wherein the means for removably and replaceably coupling the first end of the first shoulder strap to the first brassiere cup includes a retaining flap with a proximal end coupled to the first brassiere cup and a free distal end and wherein the
5 means for removably and replaceably coupling the first end of the second shoulder strap to the second brassiere cup includes a retaining flap with a proximal end coupled to the second brassiere cup and a free distal end.

8. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 7 further comprising an aperture disposed relative to
10 each of the first and second brassiere cups adjacent to the retaining flaps wherein each aperture defines an entrance to an open inner volume whereby the retaining flaps can be passed at least partially through the apertures and tucked at least partially into the open inner volumes when the prosthetic brassiere is to be worn in a strapless configuration thereby to at least partially retain and conceal the retaining flaps.

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9. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 8 wherein the apertures are disposed to an interior surface side of each cup shell.

10. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 9 wherein the means for retaining the prosthetic breast relative to the open inner volume of the first brassiere cup comprises a rear wall that cooperates with the cup shell to substantially enclose the open inner volume.

5 11. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 10 wherein the aperture that defines the entrance to the open inner volume of the first brassiere cup comprises an opening between the cup shell and the rear wall whereby a portion of the prosthetic breast can project at least partially through the aperture to maintain the breast prosthesis in a given orientation relative to the first brassiere cup and whereby the retaining flap can be tucked at least partially into the open inner volume
10 overlying the projecting portion of the prosthetic breast.

12. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 10 further comprising a laterally disposed aperture between the rear wall of the first brassiere cup and the cup shell for enabling an insertion, removal, and adjustment of the prosthetic breast.

15 13. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 12 further comprising a unitary resilient band secured to base portions of the first and second brassiere cups.

14. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 wherein the cup shell of each of the first and second brassiere cups has a volume of padding thereby to ensure a consistently symmetrical appearance of the first brassiere cup relative to the second brassiere cup.

5 15. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 further comprising a means for retaining a prosthetic breast relative to the open inner volume of the second brassiere cup.

16. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 further comprising a privacy panel traversing from an upper portion of the inboard side of the first brassiere cup to an upper portion of the
10 inboard side of the second brassiere cup.

17. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 16 wherein the privacy panel has an upper edge traversing from adjacent to an upper edge of the first brassiere cup to adjacent to an upper edge of the second brassiere cup.

15 18. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 16 further comprising a means for enabling a removal and replacement of the privacy panel whereby the prosthetic brassiere can be worn with or without the privacy panel and whereby multiple different privacy panels can be selectively retained relative to the prosthetic brassiere.

19. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 18 wherein the privacy panel has lower edges disposed in a generally V-shaped configuration.

20. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 18 wherein the means for enabling a removal and
5 replacement of the privacy panel comprises corresponding portions of hook and loop material.

21. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 20 wherein the privacy panel has an inside face and an outside face, wherein portions of hook or loop material are disposed on the outside face of the privacy panel and corresponding portions of loop or hook material are disposed to interior
10 surface sides of the first and second brassiere cups whereby the privacy panel can be retained relative to the first and second brassiere cups with a portion thereof underlying the first and second brassiere cups.

22. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 21 wherein hook material is disposed on the outside
15 face of the privacy panel and loop material is disposed to the interior surface sides of the first and second brassiere cups whereby the hook material will generally be disposed facing away from the chest of the wearer.

23. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 1 wherein the fastening arrangement comprises a
20 front-closure fastening arrangement comprising a plurality of hooks retained relative to the

inboard side of the first brassiere cup in combination with a plurality of receiving loops retained relative to the inboard side of the second brassiere cup.

24. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 23 wherein the plurality of hooks are retained to an
5 exterior surface side of the cup shell of the first brassiere cup and wherein the plurality of
receiving loops are retained to an interior surface side of the cup shell of the second brassiere
cup.

25. The prosthetic brassiere of claim 23 further comprising a flap retained relative to an
10 exterior surface side of the cup shell of the second brassiere cup for overlying and concealing the
plurality of hooks and the plurality of receiving loops.